

Message on the Observance of Independence Day, 1993 *June 29, 1993*

On Independence Day, we celebrate the birth of the first and greatest democracy of the modern era. The ideals embodied by the Declaration of Independence have served as a guide for our nation and as an inspiration for people around the world. This document delineated the very idea of America, that individual rights are derived not from the generosity of the government, but from the hand of the Almighty. The Founders forever abandoned their allegiance to the old European notions of caste and instead dedicated themselves to the belief that all people are created equal.

The brilliant men who gathered in Philadelphia 218 years ago to declare our nation's independence risked their honor, their fortunes, and their very lives to create a better future for their children and grandchildren. As the inheritors of freedom's legacy, we owe our liberties to the fact that our Founders saw the need for dramatic change and acted upon it.

Today, vast changes are sweeping the globe. Nations that have known only tyranny for cen-

turies are suddenly dedicating themselves to the ideals of freedom and democracy. And wherever freedom is proclaimed, echoes of the American Declaration of Independence can be heard. Thomas Jefferson's words are being spoken in dozens of nations in hundreds of languages.

We are justly proud of the influence that our beliefs have had on the world. But the mission of America is far from complete. While the world is filled with opportunity, it is rife with uncertainty. We must dedicate ourselves to carrying on the dreams of the Founders and adding our own chapter to the unfinished American autobiography. By embracing the changes that are altering the landscape of the world today, we help ensure a brighter, more democratic, and more peaceful world. On this Independence Day, I encourage all Americans to rededicate themselves to the conviction that our heroic journey must go forever upward.

Best wishes to everyone for a wonderful day.

BILL CLINTON

Statement on Flooding in the Midwest *June 29, 1993*

I am very concerned about the flooding in the heartland of our country, and I've asked Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy to survey the region and see firsthand what the excessive rains have done to agriculture production there. I also have directed the Federal Emergency Management Agency to keep me fully informed of their activities on behalf of the affected States.

The Mississippi River is closed to navigation over a 500-mile stretch from the Twin Cities in Minnesota to St. Louis. Clearly, this is one of the most significant natural disasters midwestern residents, business owners, and agricultural producers have faced in a very long time. This region of the country is dependent upon agricultural production, and when agriculture faces a disaster like this one, everyone is adversely affected.

Tomorrow Secretary Espy will travel to Iowa, Wisconsin (weather permitting), Minnesota, and

South Dakota to view the rain-related damage and talk face to face with farmers and area residents about the damage.

FEMA Director James Lee Witt reports that his Agency already has placed survey teams in the field where they are working with the State emergency operating centers. These teams are laying the groundwork necessary for Federal disaster assistance. We intend to speed the recovery of the affected communities and ensure disaster victims receive the help they need as rapidly as possible.

Upon his return, Secretary Espy will brief me on the condition of the area and make recommendations that will help our fellow citizens living in the region.

As you know, nine counties in southwestern Minnesota were declared disaster areas in late